

John Thacker

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WILLIAM AND RACHEL TONKS THACKER

William Thacker was born at Darlington, Staffordshire, England, June 6, 1823, a son



of Aaron and Leah Horton Thacker. He married Rachel Tonks in 1844. She was born in Willinshall, Staffordshire, England, on June 27, 1827, daughter of Firmally Timothy and Ann Jones Tonks. They were later sealed in the Endowment House on February 15, 1862. Rachel died May 7, 1893, at Charleston. William married Mary Brown in the Salt Lake Temple in 1899. She died in 1909. William died January 15, 1915, at Heber, at the home of his daughter, Isabell Moulton, at the age of 91.

William Thacker had one brother. Their father, Aaron, died when the boys were very young and their mother married again. At the age of 21, William married Rachel Tonks. She worked both before and after her marriage for a manufacturing company.

In 1856, they set sail by steerage for America, bringing with them their four living children. Leah was born September 13, 1845; Hannah, born March 22, 1847; Lida, born and died August 25, 1848; Anna Maria, born November 1, 1849; Elizabeth, born May 24, 1851; and Timothy born November 7, 1854. They had joined the LDS Church the year Elizabeth was born. They were six weeks crossing on the ship "Amazon," landing at Boston, Mass., on July 12, 1856. They went to New York, where Eliza Jane was born, November 17, 1856, who died in Philadelphia on November 5, 1857. While in Philadelphia both parents worked in a factory polishing buckles while preparing to come to Utah. The children attended school. Here Isabell was born July 12, 1858, and Sarah Ann was born January 7, 1861, who died November 6, 1861. After living in Philadelphia five years they had earned enough to provide clothing and supplies for themselves and children so were ready to start across the plains for Utah. Before they could start the U.S. officers took Wil-

liam and were going to draft him into the army to fight in the Civil War, but emigration officers freed him from the assignment. With help provided by the Emigration Fund, they left Florence, Nebraska, July 1, 1861, for Utah with an ox-team and wagon in Captain Joseph Horne's company. Charles Cowley was the teamster. The family walked, except Rachel, who was a heavy woman. They made 15 miles a day, stopping to wash, etc.

Once after a heavy rain, William found what he thought were mushrooms, gathered some and cooked them for dinner. They were toadstools and made the family very ill. After all were administered to they recovered and suffered no ill effects.

They arrived in Salt Lake September 18, 1861, and lived in a dugout west of the Temple block while William worked in President Young's blacksmith shop at the mouth of City Creek, making nails for the Salt Lake Theater. The children went to school in Brigham Young's school house with his children. November 5, 1861, William bought a farm from the Church and built an adobe house. Charles was born August 18, 1862. John was born June 7, 1863 and Fredrick A., October 1864.

After living in Salt Lake three years they moved to Cache Valley, living in Logan one year, then moving to Clarkston, then to Smithfield, then to Peoa, where he worked as a blacksmith. He also worked on the railroad coming into Utah and was at Promontory Point when the road was completed, and at the celebration of the driving of the golden spike. After this they moved to Heber and finally out south of Heber to Buysville in 1871, where he homesteaded a quarter section on Daniels Creek.

William was a small man, only five feet five. He and Rachel were very sociable people and met with others in the evenings to sing. William had a fine bass voice and Rachel, soprano. They were wonderful help in the wards this way. While in Buysville, the ward was organized and William was pointed first counselor to Charles J. Wahlquist. Rachel worked in Relief Society, helped others sew and knitted for others to help make a living for the family. William was a great 'prayer.' They were very charitable, never letting anyone go away hungry.

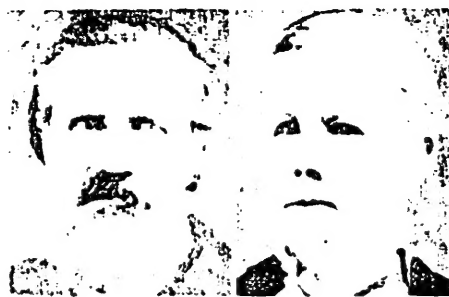
William liked to walk and would walk from Daniel and carry a bucket of eggs to

town. People report that when anyone would stop and offer him a ride, he would say, "No thanks, I'm in a hurry." In his declining years he lived with his children.

His living children were: Hannah, Anna Maria, Elizabeth, William Timothy, Isabell, Charles E., John, Fredrick A., and George Nephi Hughes, and adopted son.

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